

**# 377 01/15/07 Only fifteen minutes to change hearts**

It is easy to say that we want our children to have heart changes, but it is a much bigger task to help bring about those changes.

There are two foundational truths that parents must understand before they begin to guide their children in heart change. First, the parents themselves must be actively reading God's Word and seeking his guidance for their own lives. Second, they must understand that heart change is a life-long project of the Holy Spirit. Even the most saintly person must continue to read the Word and seek guidance as he or she becomes more Christ-like.

Let us suppose that it is a new year, school is back in session and the family has returned to the hectic morning routine. The morning news show is announcing some star's latest escapades, the doom of the economy and the current rumors in Washington. Megan cannot find the jeans she wants to wear. Jackson has misplaced his homework. Breakfast is mostly a "grab-your-own" affair. Dad is out the door before the children come to the kitchen, and Mom is frustrated that she may be late to work again. This sounds all too familiar to most American families.

Heart change in a family can begin with less than thirty minutes a day. That sounds like a big chunk of time, but the peace produced makes it worth the investment. First, require each family member to take ten minutes before going to bed to choose clothes and gather supplies for the next day. Backpacks should be loaded and sitting close to the door with only pre-packed lunches being added the next morning. Second, require that all members of the family be sitting at the breakfast table at an agreed-upon time before Dad must leave. During that time, turn off the television and open the Bible.

It takes fifteen minutes to eat a simple breakfast and discuss one verse from God's Word. During this time, there will be no lectures. Parents must not use God's Word to beat their children over the heads or prove a point. After the respite, everyone can rush off to meet the world, but they will do so with God's Word on their hearts.

Next week, I will give an example of what to do with those fifteen minutes.

